



Selling to the Council Guide

A GUIDE FOR SUPPLIERS AND CONTRACTORS

JULY 2025

This guide aims to help organisations understand how Ardal Councils buy goods, services and works and help them to increase their chances of finding out about opportunities and bidding for work.

The Ardal Councils are Cardiff, Torfaen, Monmouthshire & Vale of Glamorgan Councils who have developed this Guide.



PAGE	CONTENTS
3	Introduction
4	Ardal's Common Approach
5	Where can I find out about Ardal opportunities?
6	What rules, regulations & procurement procedures does Ardal follow?
7	Ardal's 4 Procurement Routes
9	Selection of suitable and qualified suppliers - Conditions of Participation
11	Submission of quotation or tender response and evaluation
12	Contract award
13	Delivering Well-being Benefits
14	Community Well-being benefits
15	'Real' Living Wage
16	Circular Economy and Carbon Reduction
18	Consortia and Collaborative Bids
19	Will organisations receive feedback?
19	How do Ardal Councils pay their Suppliers
19	Contract Monitoring and Management
20	Tendering Do's and Don'ts
21	Procurement Terminology
23	Further support

INTRODUCTION

This guide aims to help organisations understand how Ardal Councils buy goods, services and works and help them to increase their chances of finding out about opportunities and bidding for work. The guide also signposts organisations to additional support and information, much of it free for Welsh businesses.

Ardal is the name of the procurement partnership, run by Cardiff Council that delivers the collaborative procurement partnership across Cardiff, Monmouthshire, Torfaen, and the Vale of Glamorgan Councils. Ardal's aim is to deliver value for money and socially responsible procurement for all our Ardal partners through shared resources, knowledge, learning and expertise.

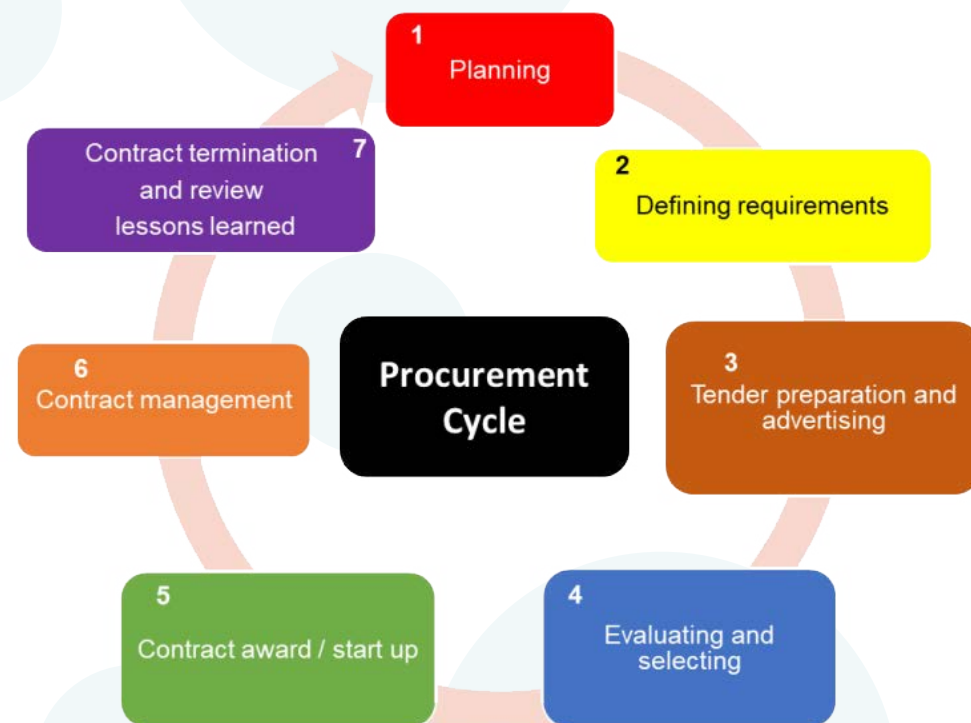
During 2024/25 Ardal's four partner authorities, Cardiff, Monmouthshire, Torfaen, and the Vale of Glamorgan, spent over £1.3 billion buying a diverse range of goods, services and works from over 15,000 suppliers and contractors.



ARDAL'S COMMON APPROACH

To deliver efficiencies for all Ardal Councils and standardise procurement processes for organisations who want to work with any Ardal Council, all Ardal Councils have adopted the same:

- **Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy** - each Strategy sets out the key role procurement will play in enabling each Ardal Council to deliver their strategic priorities including accelerating the move to net zero, ensuring 'Fair Work' through our supply chains, and maximising the local economic and social impact of our spend.
- **Socially Responsible Procurement Policy** brings together a number of different legislative requirements, policy initiatives and aspirations into a single coherent framework underpinned by 8 key procurement objectives. The primary aim of the Policy is to ensure that Ardal Councils maximise the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing that it delivers through its procurement activity. Ardal Councils want to work with organisations who share their values around promoting well-being.
- **Contract Procedure Rules** - all Ardal Councils have adopted the same four Procurement Routes within their Contract Procedure Rules. These Rules, and the supporting standardised documentation, set out how each Council will undertake procurement in a consistent way.



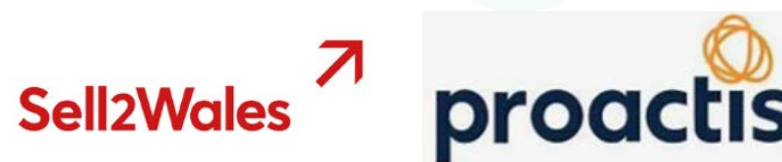
WHERE CAN I FIND OUT ABOUT ARDAL OPPORTUNITIES?

Ardal primarily seeks organisations to provide a quotation or to invite to tender via Proactis or Sell2Wales. Ardal also advertises contract opportunities through the following systems:

- **Sell2Wales** is the National Procurement website for Wales, this includes all widely advertised contract opportunities valued both below and above the Procurement Act (PA 2023) thresholds - see page 6. Sell2Wales has a direct link to the Central Digital Platform where contracts above PA 2023 thresholds must be published.
- **Proactis** is Ardal's e-tendering portal and is also used by other local authorities within Wales. Contract opportunities are invited and/or advertised via this portal to registered organisations. When registering, it is important, that organisations choose the Ardal Council they want to receive opportunities from.
- **Central Digital Platform (Find a Tender Service)** Organisations wanting to bid for opportunities above £25,000 will also need to register on the [Central Digital Platform](#). This is in addition to being registered on Sell2Wales. The Central Digital Platform requires suppliers to complete and maintain accurate and up-to-date Core Supplier Information.

Ardal encourages organisations to register on Proactis and Sell2Wales. Both are **free of charge** and allow suppliers to receive automated tender notifications by email, view opportunities via the Opportunities homepage, update and maintain their profile, receive instructions on how to access tender documents and view details of awarded contracts.

To access Sell2Wales & Proactis, click on the icons below



N.B. It is important to only register against the categories which are relevant to the goods/services/works you want to supply. This will ensure that you only receive notifications about contract opportunities relevant to your field of work.

Assistance and support on how to submit a tender is available from a number of organisations; including Business Wales. For further information, please see the 'Further Support' section.

WHAT RULES, REGULATIONS & PROCUREMENT PROCEDURES DOES ARDAL FOLLOW?

The way in which all Ardal Councils purchase goods, services and works is governed by UK law, including the Procurement Act and by each Ardal Council's own Contract Procedure Rules. Core elements of the Rules are standardised across all Ardal Councils. Ardal's Contract Procedure Rules provide the framework for ensuring that public money is spent responsibly and transparently, regardless of value in accordance with the Procurement Act. The Procurement Act thresholds (incl VAT) are:

Goods	Services	Works	Light-Touch	Concession
£214,904	£214,904	£5,372,609	£663,540	£5,372,609

The purpose of the Procurement Act is to encourage open and transparent competition which is delivered through competitive tendering throughout the UK. All public sector procurement, including below Procurement Act thresholds, must still abide by the principles of equal treatment, non-discrimination, mutual recognition, proportionality and transparency.



ARDAL'S 4 PROCUREMENT ROUTES

All Ardal Councils have updated their Contract Procedure Rules to include the same 4 procurement routes as set out below.

ROUTE 1 - QUOTATIONS Up to £25,000*

What organisations need to do:

- Register on Sell2Wales and Proactis.
- Respond when asked to provide a quotation

What the Council will do:

1. The 'buying' Directorate is responsible for obtaining at least one written quotation, but 3 quotations are recommended. If the quotation is above £10,000 the Directorate will need to justify reasons if at least 3 quotations are not sought.
2. Directorates should use Proactis and/or Sell2Wales to identify organisations to provide a quotation.
3. Where possible quotes should be sought from local suppliers.
4. Directorates will use a specification / statement of requirements to ensure the price quoted meets their requirements.
5. Quotes will only be accepted, in writing (including email) or via the Council's approved electronic procurement system.
6. Evaluate the written quotes in accordance with quotation evaluation criteria.

Request for Quote

This is a much simpler process compared to a tender. Quotes will typically be requested via Sell2Wales, or if low value via email, and suppliers may receive all or some of the following:

- Instructions for submitting the quote.
- Specification of Requirements (on which suppliers must base their quote).
- Pricing Schedule
- Evaluation criteria & scoring methodology (if there is an element of quality that must also be assessed).

ROUTE 2 - QUOTATIONS £25,000* TO £75,000*

What organisations need to do:

- Register on Sell2Wales and Proactis.
- Respond when asked to provide a quotation

What the Council will do:

1. The 'buying' Directorate is responsible for inviting at least four quotations via Sell2Wales. They are encouraged to advertise the opportunity on Sell2Wales.
2. If the opportunity is advertised a Tender Notice will be published on Sell2Wales to notify the market of the opportunity.
3. Directorates should use Sell2Wales to identify organisations to invite to provide a quotation.
4. Where possible quotes should be sought from local suppliers.
5. Directorates will invite quotations and include all or some of the following – instructions for submitting a quotation, specification of requirements, pricing schedule, evaluation criteria and scoring methodology.
6. Quotes will be evaluated and awarded via Sell2Wales.
7. A Contract Details Notice will be published via Sell2Wales to notify the market that a contract has been awarded.

Request for Quote

This is a much simpler process compared to a tender. Quotes will typically be requested via Sell2Wales, or if low value via email, and suppliers may receive all or some of the following:

- Instructions for submitting the quote.
- Specification of Requirements (on which suppliers must base their quote).
- Pricing Schedule
- Evaluation criteria & scoring methodology (if there is an element of quality that must also be assessed).

*these values are exclusive of VAT. Above Procurement Act threshold are inclusive of VAT.

Any notices will be published by Ardal Councils directly.

ARDAL'S 4 PROCUREMENT ROUTES*

ROUTE 3 – TENDERS £75,000* TO PROCUREMENT ACT THRESHOLD

What organisations need to do:

Register on Sell2Wales, Proactis and Central Digital Platform.

What the Council will do:

1. The 'buying' Directorate / Ardal Procurement Team will invite at least four tenders via Sell2Wales or Proactis. The Procurement Rules encourage that opportunities are advertised.
2. If the opportunity is advertised a Tender Notice will be published on Sell2Wales to notify the market of the opportunity.
3. Directorates will use Sell2Wales or Proactis to identify organisations to invite to bid.
4. Where possible tenders should be sought from local suppliers.
5. Directorates will invite or advertise the tender setting out their requirements in the tender pack including the evaluation criteria and scoring methodology.
6. Tenders will be evaluated and awarded via Sell2Wales or Proactis.
7. A Contract Details Notice will be published via Sell2Wales to notify the market that a contract has been awarded.

ROUTE 4 – TENDERS ABOVE PROCUREMENT ACT THRESHOLD

What organisations need to do:

Register on Sell2Wales, Proactis and Central Digital Platform.
If bidding allow enough time to submit a response by the tender deadline.

What the Council will do:

1. If a tender is above £2m it will be included on the 18-month Pipeline Notice. A Tender Notice will be published on Sell2Wales to notify the market of the opportunity.
2. Tenders will be advertised via Sell2Wales.
3. The procurement processes will follow the minimum timescale as set out in the Procurement Act. The timescales will vary according to the scale and complexity of the procurement.
4. The Tender Pack will include, specification, method statement questions, the evaluation criteria and scoring methodology.
5. Tenders will only be accepted via the Council's e-tender system (Proactis).
6. Tenders will be evaluated and awarded via Proactis.
7. A Contract Award Notice will be published on Sell2Wales to notify the market of intention to award a contract.
8. Contract Details Notice will be published via Sell2Wales to notify the market that a contract has been awarded.

*these values are exclusive of VAT. Above Procurement Act threshold are inclusive of VAT.

Any notices will be published by Ardal Councils directly.

SELECTION OF SUITABLE AND QUALIFIED SUPPLIERS – CONDITIONS OF PARTICIPATION

Ardal must ensure that suppliers are suitable and are qualified to deliver the specified requirements against an agreed contract.

In order to assess the supplier's suitability, Ardal will either:

- Issue a Procurement Specific Questionnaire (including questions on capability and capacity).
- Issue a Self-Certification Form.
- Rely on supplier data already held by Ardal.

To ensure Ardal does this in a way which is consistent and proportionate to the value, risk and complexity of the contract, Ardal has adopted the Welsh Procurement Specific Questionnaire (PSQ). This provides a standard set of questions and guidance in respect of their application and use for the following areas: These may be evaluated in various forms such as scored, pass/fail or for information only. This will be clearly outlined in the documentation.

Part 1 & 2 – Confirmation of supplier information & additional exclusions information

- Review of mandatory and discretionary criteria, including reviewing the Debarment List, to ensure that all supplier, associated persons or sub-contractors are excluded or excludable based on offences such as conspiracy, national security, corruption, fraud, bribery, bankruptcy and insolvency under the Procurement Act.

Part 3 – Procurement Specific Questions

- **Financial Capacity:** in some cases, potential suppliers may need to be registered with Dun & Bradstreet (D&B) and/or provide the last 2 years profit and loss figures. This will depend on the type of goods, services or works being tendered. In some instances where financial capacity doesn't meet the requirements of the tender, a Parent Company Guarantee may be requested.
- **Insurances:** potential suppliers may be asked to provide evidence of minimum levels of Employer's & Public Liability & Professional Indemnity at start of the contract.

- **Legal capacity:** potential suppliers may be requested to confirm they are able to comply with GDPR and UK data protection laws. Along with confirmation that they will meet the requirements of Cyber Essential Certification Scheme or equivalent.
- **Technical ability:** detail about previous experience & contracts delivered. provide evidence of contract specific competencies, register to specified bodies or qualifications e.g. Care Inspectorate Wales.
- **Health & Safety:** the extent of the assessment will be appropriate to the nature of the contract, depending on the goods, services or works provided. Where Ardal identifies that Health & Safety must be assessed, suppliers must be accredited by a Safety Schemes in Procurement (SSIP) member (or equivalent) before any contract is awarded.
- **Environmental Management:** confirm suppliers' commitment to positive environmental impact in accordance with UKAS accreditation or equivalent.
- **Quality Management:** information on quality-assurance techniques & performance review.

Part 3 – Additional Information

- **Equal Opportunities:** confirm suppliers' commitment to equal opportunities.
- **Conflicts of interest:** confirm awareness of the meaning of conflict of interest under section 81 of the Procurement Act and whether there is any or potential conflicts of interest.
- **Anti-competitive practices** – confirmation that suppliers do not make agreements which distort competition.
- **Steel** – where applicable, suppliers are to confirm their systems, policies, standards and procedures in the management of steel.
- **Ethical Employment** – suppliers may be asked to confirm that they will pay employees the Real Living Wage and, to sign up to the Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chains and compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, if applicable.
- **Carbon Reduction Plans** – in proportion to the requirements, suppliers may be required to confirm that they are taking steps to reduce Green House Gas (GHG) emissions and commit to submit a Carbon Reduction Plan.
- **Safeguarding:** confirm suppliers' commitment to comply with the Council's Safeguarding Policy for Contractors.

SUBMISSION OF QUOTATION OR TENDER RESPONSE AND EVALUATION

Dependent on the value of the contract, selected suppliers will either be issued with a Request for Quotation (RFQ) or an Invitation to Tender (ITT).

Request for Quote (Procurement Routes 1 or 2 - below £75,000) - this is a much simpler process compared to a tender. Quotes will typically be requested via Sell2Wales, or if low value via email, and suppliers may receive all or some of the following (but not limited to):

- Instructions for submitting the quote.
- Specification of Requirements (on which suppliers must base their quote).
- Pricing Schedule.
- Evaluation criteria & scoring methodology (if there is an element of quality that must also be assessed).

Suppliers will be required to return the quote electronically through Sell2Wales or via email.

Tender (Procurement Routes 3 or 4 - above £75,000) – is a much more comprehensive process. Suppliers who express an interest in the opportunity will receive a tender pack which consists of a range of tender documents. These documents can be accessed via the Councils e-tendering system. The tender pack typically consists of the following (but not limited to):

- Invitation to Tender.
- Specification of Requirements.
- Method Statements (questions asking how the requirements will be delivered).
- Evaluation criteria & scoring methodology.
- Pricing schedule.
- Community Well-Being Benefits
- Contract Terms and Conditions (T&Cs).
- Form of Tender.

At the tender/award stage, the Council will evaluate the supplier's proposal in line with the instructions provided in the tender pack. This differs to the **Conditions of Participation** which qualifies the supplier based on capability and capacity derived from **past experience**.

In accordance with the Welsh Language Standards tenders may be submitted in the English or Welsh language. A tender for a contract submitted in Welsh will not be treated less favourably than a tender submitted in English (including, amongst other matters, in relation to the closing date for receiving tenders, and in relation to the timescale for informing tenderers of decisions). Ardal will communicate with tenderers in the language of their choice, whether that's English, Welsh or bilingual.

Tender evaluation will be based on the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT). The relative importance of weightings will clearly be outlined in the tender documentation. These may cover the following headline criteria:

1. **Quality**, used for the majority (if not all) good, services and works. If used, they will be forward facing questions on how you will provide the goods, services or works.
2. **Price/cost** – where used, a form of pricing schedule will be requested to be completed to evaluate the price of the requirement.
3. **Community Well-being Benefits** – where included, suppliers will be required to set out what community well-being benefits they will commit to delivering over and above the requirements of the Contract.

In order to assess, suppliers will be asked to submit an electronic tender response via Proactis. If a supplier is interested in the opportunity they must click 'Register an interest' to express an interest. Tender documents will not be sent to suppliers by email; suppliers must access the documents from Proactis. Although documents can be viewed without registering an interest in the opportunity.

CONTRACT AWARD

Request for Quote – typically the supplier who submitted the lowest price will be awarded the contract. However, if there is a quality element as part of the evaluation, then the supplier who submitted the lowest quote may not necessarily be the one who wins the contract.

Tenders – for those evaluated on the Most Advantageous Tender (MAT), the contract will be awarded to the tenderer whose overall score is the highest on the tender evaluation criteria.



Each Ardal Council's Socially Responsible Procurement Strategy is underpinned by the same 7 key objectives:

- **Contributing to the Council's aim to be Carbon Neutral by 2030.**
- **Making procurement spend more accessible to local small businesses and third sector.**
- **Improving Fair Work and Safeguarding practices adopted by suppliers.**
- **Increasing community benefits and social value delivered by suppliers.**
- **Securing value for money and managing demand.**
- **Ensuring legal compliance and robust and transparent governance.**
- **Promoting innovative and best practice solutions.**

The primary aim of this Strategy is to ensure that Ardal maximises the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing that it delivers through its procurement activity. Ardal Councils want to work with organisations who share their values around promoting well-being.

WALES'S SEVEN WELL-BEING GOALS



Community Well-being Benefits (CWB)

Ardal tenders above £250,000 will typically ask tenderers what community well-being benefits they will commit to deliver. The successful tenderers' offer will form part of their contract. Ardal Councils use the Welsh TOMs (a menu of CWBs with a financial value attached) to measure the value of CWB commitments.

The CWB that Ardal wants its contractors to deliver include:

- ❖ Working with local schools, contributing to community regeneration schemes and supply chain / environmental initiatives.
- ❖ Providing supported, sustainable employment pathways for local long term economically inactive people as part of the workforce delivering contracts.
- ❖ Delivering the 12 commitments of the [Code of Practice: Ethical Employment in Supply Chains](#).
- ❖ Maximising supply chain opportunities for SME's including social enterprises, to bid for supply chain opportunities.
- ❖ Reporting CWB outcomes through the Thrive reporting tool and contributing to the quarterly [Ardal CWB newsletter](#).





The 'Real' Living Wage is paid by employers on a voluntary basis. It is an hourly rate which is set independently and updated yearly. It is calculated according to the basic cost of living in the UK and in 2025/26 is £12.60. The 'Real' Living Wage should not be confused with the National Living Wage (the Minimum Wage) which is legal requirement for employers.

Cardiff Council has paid the 'Real' Living Wage to its employees since September 2012 and has been accredited as a Living Wage Employer since November 2015. This means that all directly employed and agency staff are paid a minimum of the 'Real' Living Wage. There are now 225 accredited living wage employers in Cardiff, with over 10,000 employees having an uplift in their pay to the real Living Wage, resulting in an additional £100m going into the local economy.

Cardiff is an accredited Living Wage City and Cardiff Council has a 'Real' Living Wage Accreditation Support Scheme to assist Cardiff based SME's to become accredited.

For further information about the 'Real' Living Wage then please visit the [Living Wage Wales website](#).

All other Ardal Councils pay all their employees the 'real' Living Wage and are on their journeys to become accredited Living Wage employers.

Ardal now asks in its tenders whether tenderers are accredited Living Wage employers, whether all employees working on the contract will be paid the real Living Wage and if not to provide further details. These questions are not evaluated as part of the tender.

Circular Economy and Carbon Reduction

Carbon Reduction

All Ardal Councils have declared a climate and nature emergency and have committed to be Carbon Neutral Councils by 2030.

Typically, 80% of each Ardal Council's carbon footprint comes from indirect emissions, also known as Scope 3 emissions, that arise from the goods, services and works we buy.

Therefore, any reduction in our organisational carbon footprint will need to be delivered through Directorates rethinking and challenging what they buy, who they buy it from, how it is delivered, and, where appropriate, how it is used and disposed of.

We want our suppliers to operate in a way which promotes a circular economy and uses resources sustainably. We will increasingly utilise circular procurement principles to purchase in an environmentally friendly way. All Ardal Councils want to purchase in a way that supports the principles of designing out waste and pollution, keeping products and materials in use for as long as possible in order to minimise waste and negative environmental impacts. The main aim of the circular economy approach is to design waste out of the economic system. We need to think about the impacts of our purchases over the long term.

Carbon Journey Animation

Ardal has developed a [3-minute animation](#) to explain the importance of carbon reduction and how all organisations have a role to play. We have also developed a Carbon Journey Infographic to support organisations on their journey to understand their emissions and to reduce their carbon impact.



Carbon Reduction Plans

A Carbon Reduction Plan (CRP) outlines how an organisation will reduce its carbon emissions, with the ultimate goal of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. It includes identifying an organisation's baseline carbon footprint, setting targets, and outlining specific actions to reduce emissions. A carbon reduction plan should then be updated annually to reflect an organisation's current emissions.

Ardal has worked with the 10 Councils of the Southeast Wales, to ensure a consistent approach for requesting Carbon Reduction Plans across the region. All 10 Councils require a CRP on all contracts over £6m (including VAT) and as the market develops, we are looking to lower this threshold on an annual basis.

Carbon Reporting

Ardal will be increasingly incorporating carbon reporting requirements into contracts with our suppliers. This will require suppliers who have contracts over certain thresholds to begin reporting their organisational carbon footprint to Ardal. By providing this information, Ardal can use this data to apportion a percentage of these to our supply chain emissions, helping to improve the accuracy of our own carbon reporting.

Ardal will also be introducing contract-specific reporting requirements on certain contracts. This will require suppliers undertaking large Council contracts to report the emissions associated with the operations of the contract.



What is a Consortia or Collaborative bid?

A consortia bid is when two or more organisations – often SMEs or third sector organisations, join forces to submit a single, joint tender for a public contract. This approach allows smaller organisations to pool their resources, skills and experience to compete for contracts they may not be able to deliver on their own

Why is it beneficial for SMEs?

- **Increased capacity;** SMEs can collectively meet the size, turnover or experience requirements for larger contracts
- **Share risk and cost;** Bidding costs and delivery responsibilities are shared
- **Access to new markets;** SMEs can enter public sector supply chains that may have otherwise been inaccessible
- **Learning and networking;** Working with others can build long-term partnerships and improve future skills

What are the different types of Consortia bidding?

- **Informal Collaboration;** Organisations collaborating without forming a separate legal entity
- **Lead Partner Model;** One Organisation acts as the lead and submits a bid on behalf of a group

- **Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV);** A separate legal entity created to deliver the contract

Ardal encourages suppliers and contractors to submit consortia or collaborative bids for Ardal work, particularly for larger value or complex contracts.

Consortia bids may help to increase the chance of winning work and in particular benefit SMEs and the Third Sector who may not have the skills or capacity to submit bids for larger contracts alone.

Ardal acknowledges the challenge consortia or collaborative bidding creates at the early stage of a tender process. Therefore, in order to allow time to prepare consortia or collaborative submissions, Ardal will aim to provide sufficient information to suppliers prior to the tender process commencing.

As well as working collaboratively or through consortia we encourage SMEs and the Third Sector to seek subcontracting opportunities and build relationships with main contractors. Main contractors can help make supply chain opportunities visible by advertising on Sell2Wales or through Meet the Buyer events.

Assistance and support is available from a number of organisations. Further information is available on the Welsh Government [Joint Bidding](#) page.

WILL ORGANISATIONS RECEIVE FEEDBACK?

Ardal will provide feedback to successful and unsuccessful tenderers (assessment summaries) to help them improve for future opportunities. Feedback will be given in writing as part of the letter which informs the tenderer of the outcome of the procurement.

HOW DO ARDAL COUNCILS PAY THEIR SUPPLIERS?

Payment terms should be set out in the contract documents. Payment is normally within 30 working days of the Payment Team receiving a correct invoice in line with each Ardal Councils payment policies.

CONTRACT MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT

Suppliers and contractors will be expected to meet their obligations to provide the goods, services or works in accordance with the requirements set out in the contract documentation and demonstrate value for money. Ardal will strive to ensure that there is a good open and constructive working relationship with its suppliers and contractors, which will also help to identify and resolve any problems at the earliest possible juncture.



DO	DO NOT
<p>Check the deadline time and date for return of tenders. Ensure you put enough time aside to complete the documentation.</p> <p>Remember that good bid writing takes time.</p> <p>Give yourself time to ask questions and seek additional information.</p> <p>Make sure you answer the questions as set giving details of the specified requirements and provide evidence as indicated in the guidance.</p> <p>Ask for clarification if you are unsure on any part of the specification or have general queries in relation to tender documents, including contract terms and conditions. Clarification queries must be submitted via Proactis.</p> <p>Complete all required documentation in FULL prior to submitting your tender including pricing submissions</p>	<p>Do not leave your submission until last minute or return your tender after the date or time as late tenders will not be considered unless it's the result of an identified system wide failure of the Council's e-procurement system.</p> <p>Don't 'make up' the questions so you can include what you want in your response, we can only evaluate information that we have asked for.</p> <p>Don't be put off by the documents - seek support, e.g. from tender advisors and/or by attending meet the buyer events.</p> <p>Do not assume the Councils are already aware of what you do as an organisation. Evaluators are not able to take any outside knowledge into consideration – make sure you cover everything required in your tender response!</p> <p>Don't submit prices which are so low that if awarded the contract you cannot supply the goods/services at that price to the quality specified.</p> <p>Ardal has the right not to accept any tender which we think will be unviable.</p>

PROCUREMENT TERMINOLOGY

Navigating public sector procurement can involve a range of specific terms and phrases that may be unfamiliar, especially to new or smaller organisations. This section provides clear, concise definitions of commonly used procurement terminology to help you better understand tender documents, communicate effectively, and engage confidently in the bidding process.

Terminology	Explanation
Above Threshold Procurement	A procurement process where the estimated value of the contract meets or exceeds specific financial thresholds set out in the Procurement Act 2023.
Assessment Summary	A document provided to suppliers who submitted a valid tender, explaining how their bid was evaluated and why it was either successful or unsuccessful. This replaces the older concept of “outcome letters”.
Assessed Tender	A Tender which was submitted in respect of this Procurement and assessed for the purposes of determining the most advantageous tender and was not disregarded by the Contracting Authority in the assessment of tender.
Below Threshold Procurement	A procurement process where the estimated value of the contract falls below the specific financial thresholds set out in the Procurement Act 2023.
Central Digital Platform	UK Government’s new central hub for public procurement. It replaces and enhances the existing Find a Tender service and is the single location where all regulated public procurement notices must be published. Further details on the Central Digital Platform and registration are below: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Procurement Act 2023: Key actions for suppliers – Guidance on registering on the Central Digital Platform. • Information and Guidance for Suppliers – a collection of videos and guidance to support suppliers register and use the Central Digital Platform (enhanced Find a Tender Service)
Common Procurement Vocabulary (CPV) Codes	CPV codes are product or service codes used in public procurement. They help public sector buyers and suppliers speak the same language when advertising and searching for contracts. Each CPV code is a unique number that describes a specific type of good, service, or work.
Competitive Flexible Procedure	A more adaptable process that allows the Council to design a multi-stage tendering process. This can include things like shortlisting, negotiations, or presentations.
Concession Contract	A type of public contract where the supplier earns money directly from users of the service or works provided
Conditions of Participation	The conditions that a supplier must satisfy to be awarded the Contract.

Terminology	Explanation
Debarment List	The debarment list is a centrally managed, published list of suppliers who are excluded from bidding for public contracts in the UK due to serious concerns about their conduct, performance or compliance.
Dynamic Market	An agreement where suppliers can join at any time and compete for contracts, often used for common goods or services.
Framework	A long-term agreement with one or more suppliers that sets out terms for future contracts, without committing to buy anything right away.
Open Framework	A type of framework that allows new suppliers to join at set points over time. It's designed to be more flexible and competitive than traditional frameworks.
Open Procedure	A simple, one-stage process where any supplier can submit a full tender. It's used when the Council wants to keep the process straightforward and open to all.
Light-Touch Contracts	A flexible set of procurement rules for certain public service contracts—mainly in health, social care, education, and similar sectors (based on CPV codes). These services are often delivered directly to people or individuals that warrant greater flexibility.
Preliminary Market Engagement	Where a Council intends to engage with the market prior to issuing a tender. This may be in different forms such as presentations, engagement events or questionnaires. The Procurement Act sets out what can and cannot be done to ensure that any supplier is not put at an unfair advantage and/or to avoid competition being distorted.
Request for Quotation (Below £75,000)	A procurement method used to obtain competitive pricing for specific goods, services, or works. It is most used for low to mid-value contracts where the specification is clear, and price is the primary consideration.
Tender (Above £75,000)	A structured invitation issued asking suppliers to submit a formal bid to deliver a specific contract. It outlines what is required, how bids will be evaluated, and the rules suppliers must follow.
Welsh TOMs	<p>The TOM (Themes, Outcomes, Measures) System for Wales is a social value / community well-being benefits (CWB) framework designed to align with the unique legislative and policy context of Wales, particularly the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. It is compatible with and follows the principles of the UK Social Value TOM System, which is generally applicable across the UK.</p> <p>The TOM System for Wales acts as a practical toolkit for integrating community well-being benefits into procurement and project management, encouraging suppliers to demonstrate how their activities will contribute to the well-being goals of Wales.</p>

Business Wales Tendering Service supports businesses in their efforts to tender for private sector contracts, or to help them navigate through the tendering process for public sector contracts. Business Wales Specialist Advisors can:

- focus on being more proactive in advance of live tenders to partners and clients, in order to focus on assisting growth SMEs become 'tender ready'
- work closely with Buyers, both private and public sector, and assess an appropriate package of support
- hold contractor briefing events, where relevant on a 1-2-1 basis for selected tenders.
- provide access to briefings around the necessary relevant policies and accreditations
- also contribute to local supply chain development for larger Tier 1 companies.

Business Wales Events Finder provides details of events and events are also listed towards the bottom of the Sell2Wales platform which includes private, and third sector meet the buyer events.



Central Digital Platform – further information and support to register are below:

- The Procurement Act 2023: Key actions for suppliers – Guidance on registering on the Central Digital Platform.
- Information and Guidance for Suppliers – a collection of videos and guidance to support suppliers register and use the Central Digital Platform (enhanced Find a Tender Service)

Meet the Buyer Events are run by Ardal to provide suppliers with information on contract opportunities and the tender process. These are advertised to all suppliers registered on Proactis and Sell2Wales. They can also provide an opportunity for suppliers to meet with main contractors to find out about potential supply chain/sub-contracting opportunities.

Cwmpas (formerly the Wales Co-operative Centre) has a specialist team that can help organisations develop consortia.

The team can provide support on how to structure your consortium, and can provide advice on governance and legal issues that might affect you.

Third Sector and Charities can find help and support with Social Business Wales, a consortium between Cwmpas, Social Firms Wales, Development Trusts Association and Coalfields Regeneration Trust. Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) influence and shape the sector providing finance for start-ups. Links to these organisations are provide.

Ardal Procurement – please visit our [website](#)

We would like to hear from you

This guide aims to help provide organisations who want to work with Ardal with a clearer understanding of how to bid for work and what may be asked of them as a supplier or contractor.

We would like to receive your feedback on how we could improve this guide, what information you feel is missing and whether there is anything you would like to see included.

We would also like to receive your feedback with regards to your experience of doing business with Ardal, the service provided by the Commissioning and Procurement team and any issues or problems you have encountered.

Please send your comments to ardalprocurement@cardiff.gov.uk who will liaise with individual local authorities' as required.

If you would like to hear from Ardal

To receive updates and news from Ardal Councils then please scan the QR Code

